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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/660,379

09/11/2003

David J. Schroeder

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11/30/2006

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EXAMINER

GOUDREAU, GEORGE A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1763

DATE MAILED: 11/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/660,379

Applicant(s)

SCHROEDER ET AL.

Examiner

George A. Goudreau

Art Unit

1763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 September 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

George A. Goudreau
GEORGE GOUDREAU
PRIMARY EXAMINER
11-06'

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

1. This action will not be made final due to the new grounds of rejection.
2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims of record have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.
3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claims 1-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuchiya et. al. (2001-0006,224).

Tsuchiya et. al. disclose a cmp slurry for cmp polishing a wafer which is comprised of the following components:

- (0.1-50) wt.% silica abrasive particules (i.e.-fumed, etc.) ;
- (0.01-10) wt.% of inorganic salts such as salts of alkaline earth metals (i.e.-Sr, Ca, Ba, etc.);

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- (0.01-15) wt.% of an oxidizer (i.e.-H₂O₂, HNO₃, organic peroxides such as peracetic acid or nitrobenzene, etc.);

- optionally (0.01-5) wt.% of an organic acid (i.e.-oxalic acid, malonic acid, tartaric acid, malic acid, citric acid, acetic acid, propionic acid, lactic acid, succinic acid, etc.) to enhance the oxidation by the oxidizing agent; and

- optionally (0.0001-5) wt.% of an antioxidant agent (i.e.-BTA, 1, 2, 4-triazole, etc.)

The pH of the slurry is (3-9).

This is discussed specifically on pages 2-3; and discussed in general on pages 1-7. This is shown in figures 1-2. Tsuchiya et. al. fail, however, to specifically disclose the following aspects of applicant's claimed invention:

- the specific usage of a complexing agent in the cmp slurry; and

- the specific cmp polishing process parameters, which are claimed by the applicant

It would have been inherent that the organic acids such as (i.e.-tartaric acid, succinic acid, oxalic acid, malonic acid, citric acid, lactic acid, etc.) in the cmp slurry which is taught above act as a type of complexing agent for metal ions in the cmp slurry.

The examiner cites the case law listed below of interest to the applicant in this regard.

In re Swinehart (169 U.S.P.Q. 226 (CCPA)) and In re Best (195 U.S.P.Q. 430 (CCPA)) state that when an examiner has reasonable basis for believing that functional characteristics asserted to be critical for establishing novelty in the claimed subject matter may, in fact, be inherent characteristics of the prior art, the examiner possesses the authority to require an applicant to prove that the subject matter shown to be in the prior art does not possess the characteristics relied upon.

Thus, all of applicant's claimed limitations are fully met in this regard.

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It would have been prima facie obvious to employ any of a variety of different cmp polishing process parameters in the cmp polishing process which is taught above including those which are specifically claimed by the applicant. These are all well-known variables in the cmp polishing art, which are known to affect both the rate and the quality of the cmp polishing process. Further, the selection of particular values for these variables would not necessitate any undue experimentation, which would have been indicative of unexpected results.


Alternatively, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to employ the specific cmp polishing process parameters which are claimed by the applicant based upon *In re Aller* as cited below.

Where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation. ≡ In re Aller, 220 F. 2d 454, 105 USPQ 233, 235 (CCPA).

Further, all of the specific cmp polishing process parameters which are claimed by the applicant are results affective variables whose values are known to affect both the rate, and the quality of the cmp polishing process.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to examiner

George A. Goudreau at telephone number (571)-272-1434.


George A. Goudreau
Primary Examiner
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